



## Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILES

### Introduction

The information presented here is from a larger study of three user groups: commercial fishers, dive operators and environmental group members on their knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of management strategies and regulations in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS). The study profiles these user groups and provides information on user group knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of FKNMS management strategies and regulations in the baseline 1995-96 period and how things have changed over a 10-year time period. Some new baselines are also established on new management strategies and regulations.

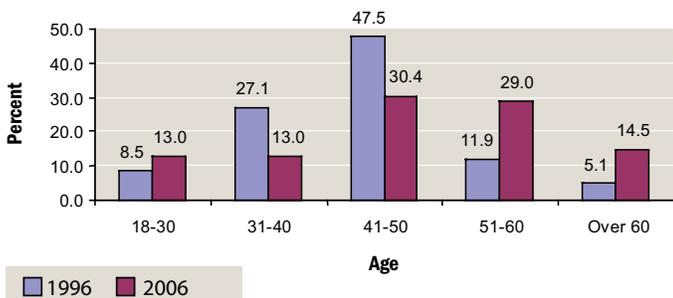
This fact sheet provides comparative socioeconomic profiles of dive operators over a 10-year period and includes information on number of dive operations, age, years in the industry, years the dive operation has been in existence, and group affiliations.

### Socioeconomic Profile of Dive Operators

**Number of Dive Operators.** In 1996, there were 75 dive operators in Monroe County/Florida Keys. This increased to 89 dive operators in 2006. However, some of the dive operators that existed in 1996 have gone out of business or changed ownership and new dive operators have opened since 1996. Only 30 of the 69 dive operators surveyed in 2006 were surveyed in 1996. So the make-up of the dive operators has changed somewhat over the 10-year period. Again, this may partially explain some of the changes in attitudes and perceptions found in the study.

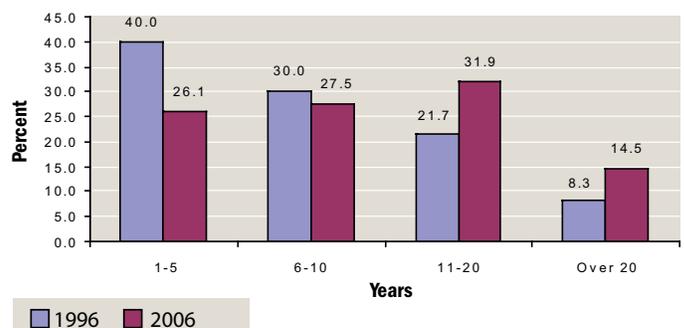
The dive operators (owners/operators) were, on average, older in 2006 versus 1996 and they were, on average, more experienced in the dive industry and the dive businesses had, on average, been in existence/operation for a longer time. So even though the dive business is fairly dynamic with much turnover, there have been a relatively large number of dive operators that were in business in the baseline. Dive operators have also affiliated themselves with more professional and other organizations, both national and local.

**AGE.** In 2006, dive operators were significantly older than in 1996 baseline.



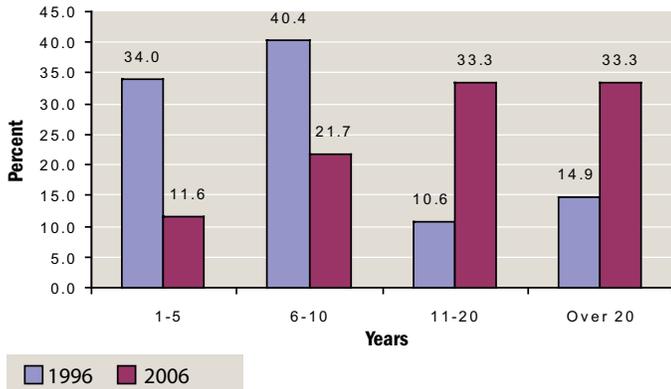
**Age of Owners/Operators:** In 1996, 13% were 18-30 years old compared to 8.5% in 2006, while 5.1% were over 60 years old in 1995-96 compared to 14.5% in 2006.

**YEARS IN INDUSTRY.** In 2006, dive operators were significantly more experienced than in 1996 baseline.



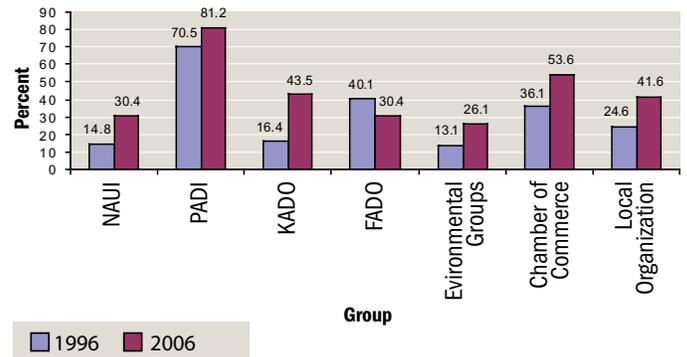
**Years in Diving Industry:** In 1996, 40% had been in the dive industry 1-5 years compared to 26% in 2006, while in 1996 8.3% had been in the dive industry over 20 years compared to 14.5% in 2006.

**YEARS DIVE OPERATION IN EXISTENCE.** In 2006, dive operations had been in existence for a significantly longer period of time than in 1996 baseline.



**Years Dive Operations in Existence in Monroe County/Florida Keys.** In 1996, 34% had been in business in the Florida Keys for 1-5 years compared to 11.6% in 2006, while in 1996 14.9% were in business in the Florida Keys for over 20 years compared to 33.3% in 2006.

**GROUP AFFILIATIONS.** Over the 10-year period, dive operators significantly increased their affiliations with many local and non local organizations.



**Group Affiliations:** Of the organizations or type of organizations dive operators were asked about membership, only one showed a decline in membership. Membership in the Florida Association of Dive Operators (FADO) dropped from 40.1% in 1996 to 30.4% in 2006. Membership in the local Keys Association of Dive Operators (KADO) increased from 16.4% in 1996 to 43.5% in 2006. Membership also increased in two other national dive certification groups. Membership in National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI) increased from 14.8% in 1996 to 30.4% in 2006 and membership in the Professional Association of Dive Instructors (PADI) increased from 70.5% in 1996 to 81.2% in 2006. Membership in the local chambers of commerce increased from 36.1% in 1996 to 53.5% in 2006, while memberships in environmental groups increased from 13.1% to 26.1% over the 10-year period. Memberships in other local organizations increased from 24.6% to 41.6% over the 10-year period.

## Access to Full Report

The full report can be cited as follows:

Shivlani, M., Leeworthy V.R., Murray, T.J., Suman, D.O., and Tonioli, F. 2008. Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions of Management Strategies and Regulations of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuaries by Commercial Fishers, Dive Operators, and Environmental Group Members: A Baseline Characterization and 10-year Comparison. Marine Sanctuaries Conservation Series ONMS-08-06. U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Silver Spring, MD. 170pp.

Available at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/conservation/pdfs/kap2.pdf>

Full Report and Executive Summary are also available in portable document format (pdf) from:

Dr. Vernon R. (Bob) Leeworthy, Chief Economist  
 Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
 1305 East West Highway, SSMC4, 11th floor  
 Silver Spring, MD 20910  
 Telephone: (301) 713-7261  
 Fax: (301) 713-0404  
 E-mail: [Bob.Leeworthy@noaa.gov](mailto:Bob.Leeworthy@noaa.gov)